



## OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Marc Elrich  
County Executive

Tiffany Ward  
Director and Chief Equity Officer

### MEMORANDUM

September 21, 2023

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director  
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director  
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Supplemental Appropriation (SA# 24-4  
Good Hope Road Shared Use Path Project (CIP No. 501902)

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that *Supplemental Appropriation #24-4 Good Hope Road Shared Use Path Project (CIP No. 501902)* affects the project's cost and timeline, and therefore has little direct bearing on racial disparities in roadway safety or Vision Zero goals. The project itself has the potential to impact disparate Vision Zero outcomes and advance racial equity and social justice in the County however, clarification of project details would be required to draw a stronger conclusion.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #24-4 Good Hope Road Shared Use Path Project (CIP No. 501902) is to use G.O. Bonds in the amount of \$562,000.00 to address escalations in the project's construction costs. This supplemental appropriation will allow construction to move forward, preventing project delays. The project was first funded in FY19, before the passage of the RESJ Act, was requested by the Good Hope Estates Civic Association, and is supported by the 1997 Cloverly Master Plan. According to available information, the aim of the project is to enhance pedestrian safety along Good Hope Road from Windmill Lane to Rainbow Drive. The pedestrian bridge addresses a section of the road where there is no sidewalk or shoulder for pedestrians.

Because this project focuses on pedestrian use the safety, this racial equity impact assessment (REIA) uses Vision Zero goals and available data to examine the extent to which the project is likely to advance racial equity and social justice in the County.

III. **ANALYSIS:** The Montgomery County Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan describes how structural racism in planning, housing, and transportation policies has shaped current racial disparities in roadway safety<sup>1</sup>. According to the Plan, serious and fatal crashes were concentrated in neighborhoods with higher concentrations of low-income and/or racial and ethnic minorities<sup>2</sup>. The analysis Metropolitan Washington Council of Government (MWCOCG)'s Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) does not differentiate between areas with concentrations of low-income individuals and concentrations of people of color. Conflating these two demographic characteristics dilutes the ways race impacts outcomes. That said, the analysis shows in a more general sense that groups experiencing the effects of inequitable housing and transportation access are disproportionately impacted by serious and fatal roadway crashes.

A July 2021 data analysis addendum to the 2030 Action Plan indicates racial and ethnic disparities in emergency room visits and mortality related to vehicle crashes, between 2015-2019. The analysis shows that Black and African American Montgomery County residents had an emergency room admission rate for motor vehicle crashes 136% higher than Asian/Pacific Islander residents and 104% higher than White, non-Hispanic residents<sup>3</sup>. Disaggregated data related to non-motorists (pedestrians and cyclists), for the same time period, was not available. However, a 2017 Vision Zero data analysis indicated that between 2011 and 2015, the fatal pedestrian crash rate per 100,000 was 2.9 for Hispanic residents, 1.6 for Black or African American residents, and .9 for White residents<sup>4</sup>. The Hispanic fatality rate for pedestrian-involved accidents was more than double the fatality rate for non-Hispanic White residents.

Publicly available county-level data, provided by the State, about non-motorist-related incidents, is also not disaggregated by race and ethnicity or disability, although it is disaggregated by age and gender. Updated non-motorist injury and fatality rates by race, ethnicity, age, gender, and disability are critical for conducting a robust racial equity analysis of progress on the County's Vision Zero goals.

Available information about the Good Hope Road project indicates that it is a part of the "Separated, Low-Stress Bicycle Facilities" priority area of the Vision Zero FY24-25

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/Resources/Files/vz2030-plan.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/Resources/Files/vz2030-plan.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/Resources/Files/vz2030-data.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://mcgov-gis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=60410e6f22844d2cbb619505cb6e7bb>

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Workplan<sup>5</sup>. Within the work plan, projects in this priority area were described as making some effort to close racial and ethnic disparities in safety outcomes. While the specific methodology used for making this determination was not included in the work plan, it did outline key community engagement and resource prioritization actions that align with best practices<sup>6</sup> for leading to more equitable outcomes.

Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the three census tracts encompassing the Good Hope Road project area are as follows<sup>7</sup>:

Census tract	Census Tract Number	% Black	% Asian and Pacific Islander	% Hispanic	% Other or Two or more races	% White	Median household income
A	<a href="#">24031701407</a> (westside of Good Hope Road)	27%	10%	10%	8%	47%	\$146,484
B	<a href="#">24031701408</a> (covering the east and west sides of Good Hope Road north of the intersection of Good Hope and Briggs Cheney Road)	16%	14%	22%	3%	45%	\$132,869
C	<a href="#">24031701415</a> (eastside of Good Hope Road)	37%	13%	19%	7%	24%	\$92,380

According to American Community Survey data from 2016-2020, the percentage of households without a vehicle is zero for all three census tracts<sup>8</sup>. Overall, this data suggests that the project affects two census tracts (A and B) with demographic characteristics similar to the County but with median household incomes higher than the County’s median income in 2021<sup>9</sup>. The data also suggests that larger percentages of residents in

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/Resources/Files/FY24-25\\_Vision\\_Zero\\_Workplan.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/Resources/Files/FY24-25_Vision_Zero_Workplan.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [https://transitcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Equity-in-Practice\\_web.pdf](https://transitcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Equity-in-Practice_web.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Data is from Census Reporter for each Census Tract.

<sup>8</sup> Data is from a racial equity mapping tool under development by MCDOT. The tool pulls together data from multiple sources. This specific datapoint is from the American Community Survey, 2016-2020.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/montgomerycountymaryland/PST045222>

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Census tract C, compared to A and B (and the county overall), are likely to experience racial disparities affecting roadway safety and Vision Zero goals.

At the time of this analysis, it was unclear the extent to which these demographic and income differences were considered in outreach, community engagement, and design related to this project. The remaining questions include: Will the Shared Use path be on the East or Westside of Good Hope Road? If the project is on the West side of the road, how will residents from the East side access it? How will residents in the affected area be informed about the progress or the availability of the shared use path? What is the primary intended use of the shared use path—commuting, transportation connectivity, or leisure? Answers to these questions and the community's feedback can help to clarify the extent to which this project is likely to reduce disparities in roadway safety and any other transit inequities.

cc: David Dise, Director, Department of General Services  
Ken Hartman, Director, Strategic Partnerships, Office of the County Executive